

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1 line 15 with the following paragraph:

A diffuser is commonly used to slow the flow ~~of the~~ and to increase the static pressure of the working air stream after it leaves the outlet of the working air fan or impeller of a motor-fan assembly. The result of this increased static pressure rise (or suction) in a vacuum cleaner fan system is an increase in air-watts for a given amount of input power. While diffusers do a good job of improving system efficiency, they can have a negative effect in that unwanted noise can be generated during the process. This unwanted noise is commonly produced at the fan blade passing frequency. It has been found that a diffuser in which the vanes are oriented in an axial manner and not directly across from the fan blade tips can reduce or eliminate noise generated at the blade passage frequency. The vanes are axially arranged around the periphery of the diffuser to improve performance by converting air velocity into static pressure rise. The vanes also reduce noise by aligning the flow and making it more uniform. The flow is directed to radially arranged return vanes on the under side of the diffuser which further slows the flow and directs it to the interior of the motor for cooling.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 17, with the following paragraph:

Referring now to FIGS. 2 through 4, shown is a motor-fan assembly 100 with a diffuser 200, according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention. Coincident with the motor shaft 110 is the diffuser 200, an impeller 260 and a housing cover 270. Air is drawn (arrows 340) into the suction inlet 271 located at the center of housing 270 by the impeller 200 and passes through the impeller 200 ~~(arrows) 350~~ (arrows 350) being directed toward diffuser 200 as shown by arrows 350. Air is drawn into diffuser 200 through apertures 205 ringing the periphery 206 of diffuser 200. The air then enters a plurality of channels or vanes 210 also ringing the periphery 206 of diffuser 200 but located on the lower side 216 of diffuser [216]

200. The channels or vanes 210 improve performance by converting air velocity into static pressure rise. While diffusers such as diffuser 200 do a good job of improving system efficiency, they can have a negative effect in that unwanted noise can be generated during the process. This unwanted noise is commonly produced at the fan blade passing frequency of the working air fan. It has been found that a diffuser in which the vanes are oriented in an axial manner and not directly across from the fan blade tips can reduce or eliminate noise generated at the blade passage frequency. The vanes or channels 210 also reduce noise by aligning the flow and making it more uniform. The flow is directed to radially arranged return vanes 215 on the under side of the diffuser 200 which further slows the flow and directs some of the air through (arrows 360) to the interior 161 and internal components 160 of the motor-fan assembly 100 for cooling. Some of the air (arrows 355) is exhausted to the atmosphere through a port 165 formed in a collar 120. The air directed to the interior 161 is then further directed (arrows 365) to the atmosphere through ports 170.